

UNCLASSIFIED

AD NUMBER
AD424666
NEW LIMITATION CHANGE
TO Approved for public release, distribution unlimited
FROM Distribution authorized to U.S. Gov't. agencies and their contractors; Administrative/Operational Use; OCT 1963. Other requests shall be referred to United States Army Biological Labs., Fort Detrick, MD.
AUTHORITY
BDRL D/A ltr, 27 Sep 1971

THIS PAGE IS UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

AD 4 2 4 6 6 6

DEFENSE DOCUMENTATION CENTER

FOR

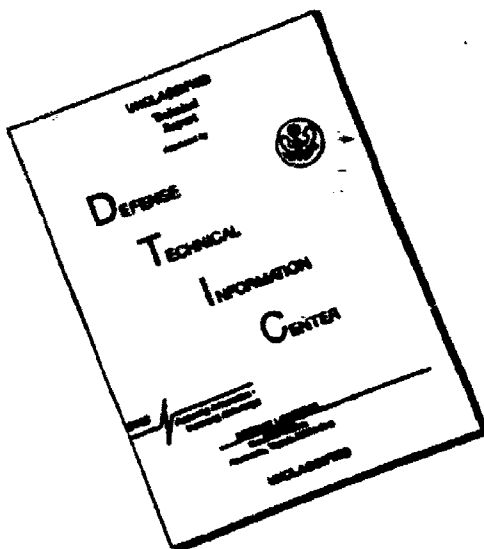
SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION

CAMERON STATION, ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA



UNCLASSIFIED

DISCLAIMER NOTICE



**THIS DOCUMENT IS BEST
QUALITY AVAILABLE. THE COPY
FURNISHED TO DTIC CONTAINED
A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF
PAGES WHICH DO NOT
REPRODUCE LEGIBLY.**

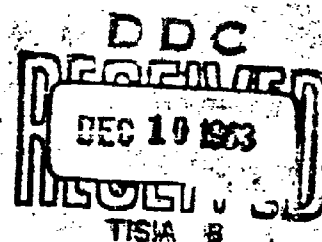
NOTICE: When government or other drawings, specifications or other data are used for any purpose other than in connection with a definitely related government procurement operation, the U. S. Government thereby incurs no responsibility, nor any obligation whatsoever; and the fact that the Government may have formulated, furnished, or in any way supplied the said drawings, specifications, or other data is not to be regarded by implication or otherwise as in any manner licensing the holder or any other person or corporation, or conveying any rights or permission to manufacture, use or sell any patented invention that may in any way be related thereto.

AS AD No. 424666

TECHNICAL MANUSCRIPT 108

EFFECT OF GUANIDINIUM SALTS ON THE TOXICITY OF BOTULINUM TOXIN

OCTOBER 1963



UNITED STATES ARMY
BIOLOGICAL LABORATORIES
FORT DETRICK

U.S. ARMY BIOLOGICAL LABORATORIES
Fort Detrick, Frederick, Maryland

TECHNICAL MANUSCRIPT 108

EFFECT OF GUANIDINIUM SALTS ON THE TOXICITY
OF BOTULINUM TOXIN

David Stefanye

Robert T. Iwamasa

Edward J. Schantz

Leonard Spero

Physical Sciences Division
DIRECTOR OF BIOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Project LA012501B02804

October 1963

This material was originally
submitted as manuscript 5236.

DDC AVAILABILITY NOTICE

Qualified requestors may obtain copies of this
document from DDC.

Foreign announcement and dissemination of this
document by DDC is limited.

The information in this document has not been
cleared for release to the public.

ABSTRACT

The effect of guanidinium salts on the stability of botulinum toxin and the mechanisms through which denaturation by these salts occurs is described. Some salts are effective in reducing toxicity at low concentrations; in others, toxicity is retained even in saturated solution. The nature of the interaction is complex, involving more than a change in folding or conformation. The hypothesis that salt solutions with high thermodynamic water activity labilize the hydrogen-bonded structure of the protein is shown to be invalid. Also shown to be inapplicable is the hypothesis that a direct effect of the anion on the guanidinium cation leads to a reduction of its thermodynamic activity and ability to break hydrogen bonds. The protective mechanism appears to operate via binding of anions across clusters of cationic sites on the charged protein to preserve spatial configurations and charge distributions.

EFFECT OF GUANIDINIUM SALTS ON THE TOXICITY OF BOTULINUM TOXIN

The nature of the mechanism through which urea and guanidinium salts denature proteins has been the subject of continuing investigation, and most recently a solubilizing action on hydrophobic groups has been proposed as the responsible property.^{1,2} In these studies, guanidinium chloride has been the salt almost universally selected. There is evidence, however, that all guanidinium salts are not equally effective. Greenstein reported that, although guanidinium chloride liberated titratable sulfhydryl groups from ovalbumin, the sulfate, acetate, and carbonate salts did not. This difference led us to examine the effect of a series of guanidinium salts of various anions upon the biological activity and structure of botulinum toxin, type A. We find that a specific anion effect is indeed involved in the action of guanidinium salts.

The salts were prepared from guanidinium carbonate and the desired acid by double displacement and their purity was checked by micro-Kjeldahl. The inactivations were carried out by adding 0.10 milliliter of crystalline botulinum toxin, type A, at a concentration of four micrograms per milliliter in pH 3.8, 0.05 M acetate buffer to each of a series of tubes containing 10.0 milliliters of a guanidine salt of known concentration, mixing gently, and allowing the mixture to stand overnight at room temperature. The mixtures were at pH 6.5 to 7, on the alkaline side of the protein isoelectric point. Toxicities were determined by bioassay.⁴ Controls of protein-free guanidinium salts exhibited no toxicity to mice* at the dilutions used for the toxin assay.

Table I shows the inactivation of botulinum toxin by several salts, including guanidinium chloride and urea as reference comparisons. The most striking observation is the wide variation obtained, a difference of some fortyfold at the extremes. More than half of the salts tested were more effective denaturants than guanidinium chloride; on the other hand, complete stability of the toxin was found in saturated solutions of several others. No explanation is presently available for the difference between meso- and D,L-tartrate and between the two phosphates that might be expected to equilibrate to nearly identical composition.

The nature of the interaction is complex, involving much more than a change in folding or conformation. In 1 M guanidinium chloride, the toxin retained its toxicity and was homogeneous in the ultracentrifuge with an unchanged value of $s_{20,w}$. In 2 M guanidinium chloride the toxicity was destroyed and three peaks were observed in the ultracentrifuge. In 4 M guanidinium sulfate, on the other hand, toxicity was retained and only one peak with an unaltered sedimentation constant was found in the ultracentrifuge.

* In conducting the research reported herein the investigators adhered to "Principles of Laboratory Animal Care" as established by the National Society for Medical Research.

TABLE I. INACTIVATION OF BOTULINUM TOXIN BY GUANIDINIUM SALTS

Anion of Guanidinium Salt	Concentration for 50% Inhibition, M
Benzoate	0.1
Meso-Tartrate	<1
Phthalate	<1
Thiocyanate	0.75
Monohydrogenphosphate (HPO_4^-)	0.8 ^a
Fluoride	0.9
Glutarate	0.9
Acetate	0.9
Malonate	0.9
Citrate	1.25
Fumarate	1.4
Chloride	2.0
D,L-Tartrate	2.25
Malate	3.3
Succinate	3.3
Oxalate	>3 ^a
Dihydrogenphosphate (H_2PO_4^-)	>3.6 ^a
Sulfate	>4 ^a
Urea	6

a. Saturated solution.

Although some of the salts are out of line, notably citrate, a reasonable correlation was observed when the salt concentration causing 50 per cent reduction in toxicity was plotted against available values of the free energy or enthalpy of hydration of the anions (benzoate, thiocyanate, acetate, chloride, and succinate) or against the free energy of formation of the ions from the elements. All of these parameters are known to be linearly proportional to the lyotropic numbers.⁶ Lyotropic action has been pictured⁶ "as a matter of competition between the dissolved salt and the macromolecular component towards water." According to this mechanism, an alteration of the hydration state at a hydrophilic junction point in a protein will result in a free energy change, the sign and magnitude of which will govern the physico-chemical or biological changes associated with the lyotropic series. A similar concept was employed by Harrington and Schellman⁷ to explain the ability of certain salts (e.g. LiBr) to enhance protein stability. They proposed that solutions of salts with high activity coefficients, and correspondingly greatly reduced water activity, tend to cause a maximum number of intramolecular hydrogen bonds to form in a protein. Conversely, salts with low activity coefficients and a high water activity should tend to labilize the hydrogen-bonded structure of a protein and decrease its stability. This hypothesis

is inapplicable in our case. Indeed, just the opposite of the predicted result was obtained, botulinum toxin being more stable in solutions of guanidinium salts with low activity coefficients.

An alternative and more satisfactory explanation for the specific anion effect is based on anion binding to the protein molecule. Such binding is voluminously documented; Scatchard's studies⁹ with serum albumin are particularly pertinent. The anions of a series of salts with a common cation were shown to bind according to a lyotropic series. Boyer *et al.*^{9,10} showed that anion binding could increase protein stability. Lengthening the carbon chain from acetate to caprylate progressively augmented the stability of serum albumin against thermal, urea, and guanidine denaturation. Their data demonstrated that the stabilization was a function of the size and structure of the anion and the amount bound. However, it should be emphasized that there is no *a priori* reason for anion binding to protect a protein; indeed, caprylate was shown to labilize several proteins. Benzoate has a similar effect on botulinum toxin; the sodium salt inactivated at the same concentration as the guanidinium salt. The mechanism of protection afforded botulinum toxin by anion binding is obviously then only conjecture. Cationic side chains certainly participate in this binding, either singly¹¹ or in cluster,¹² and it is perhaps significant that charged lysine groups are essential for the retention of toxicity.¹³ The anion may preserve the spatial charge interrelationships of the active toxin.

One additional explanation may be invoked to explain the present data. This is a direct effect of the anion upon the guanidinium cation leading to a reduction in its thermodynamic activity. Reduced activity coefficients in concentrated solutions are attributed either to the formation of an ion-pair or a complex ion.¹⁴ Aside from the fact that there is no reason to assume these forms are inactive as denaturants, we believe that this mechanism is not operative. Examination of tables of activity coefficients of the sodium and potassium salts of some of these anions, (e.g. thiocyanate, fluoride, and acetate) reveals that the differences are not sufficient to account for the effects observed. Greenstein's observation⁷ that guanidinium acetate did not denature ovalbumin provides further evidence, since sodium and potassium acetate have higher activity coefficients than the respective chlorides.

LITERATURE CITED

1. Whitney, P.L., and Tanford, C.J. "Solubility of amino acids in aqueous urea solutions and its implications for the denaturation of proteins by urea," J. Biol. Chem. 237:1735-1737, 1962.
2. Steinberg, I.Z., and Scharaga, H.A. "Chromatography on columns packed with a nonpolar material," J. Am. Chem. Soc. 84:2890-2892, 1962.
3. Greenstein, J.P. "Sulphydryl groups in proteins. III. The effect on egg albumin of various salts of guanidine," J. Biol. Chem. 130:519-526, 1939.
4. Boor, A.K.; Tresselt, H.B.; and Schantz, E.J. "Effects of salts and colloids on the potency of botulinum toxin," Proc. Soc. Exptl. Biol. Med. 89:270-272, 1955.
5. McBain, J.W. "Colloid science," Boston, D.C. Heath and Co. 1950. p. 138.
6. Kruyt, H.R. "Colloid science," New York, Elsevier Publishing Co. 1949. p. 366.
7. Harrington, W.F., and Schellman, J.A. "Evidence for the instability of hydrogen-bonded peptide structures in water, based on studies of ribonuclease and oxidized ribonuclease," Compt. Rend. Trav. Lab. Carlsberg, Ser. Chim. 30:167-186, 1957.
8. Scatchard, G., and Black, E.S. "The effects of salts on the isoelectric and isoelectric points of proteins," J. Phys. and Colloid Chem. 53:88-99, 1949.
9. Boyer, P.D.; Lum, F.G.; Ballou, G.A.; Luck, J.M.; and Rice, R.G. "The combination of fatty acids and related compounds with serum albumin. I. Stabilization against denaturation," J. Biol. Chem. 162:181-198, 1946.
10. Boyer, P.D.; Ballou, G.A.; and Luck, J.M. "The combination of fatty acids and related compounds with serum albumin. II. Stabilization against urea and guanidine denaturation," J. Biol. Chem. 162:199-208, 1946.
11. Klotz, I.M., in Neurath, H., and Bailey, K. "The proteins," Vol. 1, New York, Academic Press, 1953. p. 788.
12. Saroff, H.A., and Carroll, W.R. "Binding of chloride and sulfate ions to ribonuclease," J. Biol. Chem. 237:3384-3387, 1962.

13. Spero, L. "Alkaline inactivation of botulinum toxin," Arch. Biochem. Biophys. 73:484-491, 1958.
14. Robinson, R.A., and Stokes, R.H. "Electrolyte solutions," London, Butterworth Publications, 1955. p. 218.